

## **§ 963.4**

### **§ 963.4 Presiding Officer.**

(a) The presiding officer shall be an Administrative Law Judge or an Administrative Judge qualified in accordance with law. The Judicial Officer assigns cases under this part. Judicial Officer includes Associate Judicial Officer upon delegation thereto. The Judicial Officer may, on his or her own initiative or for good cause found, preside at the reception of evidence.

(b) The presiding officer has authority to:

(1) Take such action as may be necessary properly to preside over the proceeding and render decision therein;

(2) Render an initial decision, if the presiding officer is not the Judicial Officer, which becomes the final agency decision unless a timely appeal is taken; the Judicial Officer may issue a tentative or a final decision.

[52 FR 18912, May 20, 1987, as amended at 62 FR 4459, Jan. 30, 1997]

### **§ 963.5 Appearances.**

(a) *Petitioner.* A petitioner may appear and be heard in person or by attorney. An attorney may practice before the Postal Service in accordance with applicable rules issued by the Judicial Officer (see Part 951 of this chapter). When a petitioner is represented by an attorney, all pleadings and other papers to be served on petitioner after entry of the attorney's appearance shall be mailed to the attorney. A petitioner must promptly file notice of any change of attorney.

(b) *Postal Service.* The Postal Service will be represented by its General Counsel or any attorney designated by the General Counsel.

### **§ 963.6 Computation of time.**

A designated period of time under these rules means calendar days, excludes the day the period begins, and includes the last day of the period unless the last day is a Saturday, Sunday, or legal holiday, in which case the period runs until the close of business on the next business day.

### **§ 963.7 Location of hearing.**

Hearings are held at 2101 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 600, Arlington, VA 22201–

## **39 CFR Ch. I (7–1–11 Edition)**

3078, or other locations designated by the presiding officer.

[63 FR 66053, Dec. 1, 1998]

### **§ 963.8 Change of place of hearing.**

Not later than the date fixed for the filing of the answer, a party may file a request that a hearing be held to receive evidence in his or her behalf at a place other than that designated for hearing in the notice. The party shall support his or her request with a statement outlining:

(a) The evidence to be offered in such place;

(b) The names and addresses of the witnesses who will testify;

(c) The reasons why such evidence cannot be produced at Arlington, VA.

The presiding officer shall consider the convenience and necessity of the parties and the relevance of the evidence to be offered.

[52 FR 18912, May 20, 1987, as amended at 62 FR 4459, Jan. 30, 1997; 63 FR 66053, Dec. 1, 1998]

### **§ 963.9 Election as to hearing.**

If both parties elect, an oral hearing may be waived and the matter submitted for decision on the basis of the petition and answer, and of any documentary evidence or briefs requested by the presiding officer. The written election to waive oral hearing must be received by the Recorder no later than 10 days prior to the scheduled hearing date.

### **§ 963.10 Continuances and extensions.**

Continuances and extensions will be granted by the presiding officer for good cause shown.

### **§ 963.11 Default.**

If a petitioner, without notice or cause satisfactory to the presiding officer, fails to appear at the hearing or comply with any of the provisions of these rules or an order issued by the presiding officer, the petitioner may be deemed to have abandoned his or her petition and to have acquiesced in the allegations of the complaint. The presiding officer thereupon may find the petitioner to be in default and refer the